

## News Release

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### Wisconsin negotiates Google Apps agreement for school districts

*Extensive, no-cost software package and related training available to public schools, without contract hassles*

MADISON — State Superintendent Tony Evers announced today that the Department of Public Instruction has negotiated and entered into an agreement to allow Wisconsin public schools to use the Google Apps for Education suite of software to free up funding and staff time and increase the use of collaboration and technology in education.

“The Google Apps agreement is a great example of a private sector partner jumping right into the mission of helping to educate our next generation of leaders, workers, and innovators,” Evers said. “This will help students learn current technology and methods, and allow schools to save time and money. I’m glad we were able to pursue this opportunity on behalf of Wisconsin schools.”

The core applications in the Google Apps suite are an e-mail, chat, and calendar system (Gmail, Google Talk, Google Calendar), cloud collaboration software (Google Docs, Google Sites, Google Groups), and a private-domain on-line video platform (Google Video for Education). Also included are dozens of other services ranging from a popular blog platform (Blogger) to geographic imaging (Google Earth) to voicemail and telephone management (Google Voice). The applications are easy to use and are housed on Google's servers, allowing districts to reduce costs associated with maintaining their existing solutions.

Google normally offers the suite to schools for free, but requires a contract. The department worked with Google to negotiate a statewide contract, which makes it easy for districts across Wisconsin to take full advantage of Google Apps. In addition, the agency has partnered with the state’s cooperative educational service agencies (CESAs) to offer trainings, beginning this summer, both on how to technically implement the tools and how to incorporate them into students’ learning experiences. The department also expects to negotiate volume discounts from Google for add-on elements and services that Wisconsin districts may require as they move forward using the software.

The agreement includes language assuring that all confidential information from Wisconsin schools will not be used or disclosed by Google.

(more)

A large number of Wisconsin educators have either already been using or strongly considering Google Apps for Education. Oregon School District started using the suite in 2007, and Technology Director Jon Tanner says it has “saved tens of thousands of dollars, improved the reliability of our email systems, enabled easier collaboration for staff and students, and provided students with experience on the kinds of web-based, collaborative software that they will use in the workplace.” In Janesville, teachers use the software to make their classrooms paperless, and one middle school distributes its newspaper using Google Sites. Kathy Boguszewski, library media and instructional technology coordinator, says "Google Apps is changing how we work and teach, and we are loving it!"

Some other activities in which the applications could enhance student learning include collaborative editing of group projects, collective brainstorming and selection of ideas (using Google Moderator), and e-portfolios where students use a blog format to present and reflect on their work throughout their year.

All Wisconsin public, PK-12 schools and related public agencies are covered under the agreement. To begin using Google Apps under the contract, these schools and organizations will need only to sign a half-page form consenting to the contract terms. The department will provide more information to school district technology coordinators within the next several weeks.

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**NOTES:** This news release is available electronically at [http://dpi.wi.gov/eis/pdf/dpinr2011\\_69.pdf](http://dpi.wi.gov/eis/pdf/dpinr2011_69.pdf). Google Apps for Education can be found at <http://www.google.com/apps/intl/en/edu>. Information about the Wisconsin CESAs’ professional development efforts can be found at <https://sites.google.com/site/wiscgapps/home>. Google, Google Apps, Gmail, Google Talk, Google Calendar, Google Docs, Google Sites, Google Video, Blogger, Google Earth, Google Voice, Google Moderator, and Google Forms are trademarks of Google Inc.